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MUSTERED INTO SERVICE.

BY A CHAPLAIN IN THE C. S. ARMY.

You have been "mustered into service," my beloved friend, in the presence of your fellow-soldiers, of holy angels of God, your creator and preserver; you have solemnly sworn to support, protect and defend the dignity and honor of this young Confederacy. You have come up manfully to the defence of your invaded, insulted fatherland. The sons of the heroes of King's Mountain, the gallant and chivalrous descendants of Moultrie and of Marion, the sturdy yeomanry of the land of Oglethorpe, the patriot and the philanthropist, have already been "mustered into service." The broad bosom of the fertile West has poured forth her rich tribute of strong arms and stout hearts at her country's feet; the golden gates of the sunny South have been opened wide to admit her swelling streams of money and of men; from hill and vale, from mountain top and ocean beach, old Virginia's sons have risen up like one man—her blades of grass being transformed into armed legions by the touch of Ithuriel's spear.

A company of soldiers had been defeated and routed by the enemy. Two of the devoted band were wandering, in company, through the dismal wastes of a wild and rugged mountain. The blinding snow beat fearfully in their faces, and the rude and wintry winds howled mournfully around them. For a time they went bravely on their dreary path; but with the deepening shades and freezing blasts of night there fell a weight upon their brain and eyes which seemed to be irresistible. Presently the foot of the foremost struck a heap that lay across their path. No stone was that, though no stone could be colder. It was the body of

one of their number, who had laid himself down to die, far away from his home and his cherished friends. The one stopped to examine the cold and senseless matter which lay at his feet. The other passed on his way, thinking only of his own preservation. The next moment the noble soldier had taken a companion in his arms, was chafing his chest, hands and brow, breathing upon the stiff, cold lips the warm breath of his living soul, pressing the silent heart to the beating pulse of his own generous bosom. The effort to save another had brought back to himself life, and warmth, and energy. Hand in hand they wound their weary way down the bleak sides of the desolate mountain, only to find their companion, who had passed on, cold and silent in the chilling embrace of death. He saved his fellow soldier, and was saved himself. Soldiers of the Confederate army, "go thou and do likewise."

Your being "mustered into service" implies, my fellow soldier, that the allegiance which you once owed to another is now no longer binding. As long as the government of the United States afforded you protection for your liberty and your life, to it you belonged, and its laws you were bound to obey. This allegiance is now honestly and honorably due to another.

Christian soldier, have you utterly renounced all allegiance to the world, to the flesh, to the devil? Have you given up all the enjoyments which the world afforded, have you abandoned the sinful lusts of the flesh, have you solemnly abjured all connection with the devil's dominion? If so, then you are a worthy soldier; you deserve a high position in the ranks; you merit honorable mention at the hands of your leaders. If you have not complied with these requirements, then you have no right to fight under the banner of the Cross; your name should be stricken from the muster-

roll, and, amid the taunts and gibes of your comrades in arms, you should at once be drummed out of the army.

2. The word *service* implies obedience. No greater curse can be inflicted on an army than disobedient soldiery.

The lawlessness of the Northern army is one of our grounds of hope. Their marked disobedience to the orders of their commanders, their total ignoring of all authority, is obliged to terminate, as it has already done at Bethel, Bull Run and Manassas, in defeat and disgrace. Now, Christian soldier, you acknowledge that you have renounced all allegiance to our enemy, the devil, and therefore have an honest and honorable right to fight under the proud banner of the commonwealth of Israel. But one of the essentials of a good soldier, I just now said, was obedience. It matters not how great your loyalty, without acquiescence in the will of the Captain of your salvation, you cannot look for victory. Do you perform every duty laid down in the "Army Regulations of the Christian Soldier"—the Bible? When the enemy of our happiness is continually prowling around our encampment, do you never slumber at your post, jeoparding the valuable souls of your companions? Do you perform every duty and discharge every obligation that is enjoined upon you? Or do you shirk duty whenever an opportunity offers? Do you, in short, rebel against the authority of those whom Christ has appointed your officers, thus sowing seeds of discord in our encampment, and placing us at the mercy of the enemy? Do you not remember what the centurion says of the obedience of the soldiers under his command?

3. Inseparable from the idea of service is that of *self-denial.* The soldier's life is emphatically one of hardship. Aside from being separated from those we love,

from our cherished homes and our Sabbath and sanctuary privileges, we can no longer lie down at night on soft beds of ease, we can no longer rest beneath the genial shade of the old oak which throws its sinewy arms above the well-remembered play-ground of our early boyhood, we can no longer tempt our sickly palates with delicate luxuries, but it is ours to sleep on the cold ground, with our knapsack for a pillow and the blue canopy of heaven our only shelter, to march through the long hours of the weary day beneath a blazing sun, with a hard biscuit to satisfy the gnawings of hunger, and the warm contents of a heated canteen to slake our burning thirst.

Thus is it with the Christian soldier. There are a great many pleasures which must be given up, luxuries dispensed with, and creature comforts sacrificed, if we desire to be worthy followers of Jesus Christ. But all these things are for our good. They strengthen and nerve us against the wiles of our great adversary. We find holiday soldiers under the banner of the Cross, just as we do in our armies. Men who can't stand the sunshine of prosperity, who can't weather the winds and storms of adversity, who can't resist the alluring viands which Satan places before them. As in the one case, so in the other; such soldiers are but an incumbrance, which retards the progress of the march, and the sooner they are dispensed with the better. But, reader, I trust you are willing to "endure hardness as a good soldier of Christ."

4. Although you have renounced all allegiance to the old government; are obedient to all the requirements of your officers, and endure the hardships incident to a soldier's life, there is still another very important question. Is your service *willing?* Though in the first instance you *volunteered* your services, yet it does not

follow, as a matter of course, you are now engaged in this work with a perfectly cheerful heart and mind. You may have entered the service under various motives; it might have been under the momentary influence of excitement, or through desire of distinction, or simply because you had nothing else to engage your thoughts, and have found the duties much more onerous than you expected, the yoke of confinement too galling for your warm, impulsive Southern nature.

Now, unless this service is performed with perfect willingness, not only is your lot rendered doubly irksome, but the duties are very liable to be carelessly performed, and your spirit will be quickly caught by your companions, and the influence exerted on others prove extremely pernicious and greatly injure a cause in which every one should be enlisted with his whole heart.

How stands the case with you, my fellow-soldier of the Cross? Is God's service a delight, or does his yoke prove grievous and his burden heavy? I do not intend discussing the origin of this willingness of heart which is so essential for the well-being of the army of the Lord, but only say, in emphatic terms, as you cannot acceptably serve your country without it, neither can you your God. Says the Psalmist, "Thy people shall be *willing* in the day of thy power." The consequence of the absence of this willingness will at once be obvious to every thinking mind. It must eventually end in your own downfall and destruction, as, also, in all probability, in that of many of your companions and friends.

5. There is one other essential element in the service of your Saviour, in whose ranks you are now enlisted, to which I need only allude, as it must necessarily oftentimes occur to your own mind. I mean *watchful-*

ness. "Therefore, let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober."

6. You have been "mustered into service," my fellow soldier, but what sort of service is it? Most unhesitatingly, ACTIVE SERVICE. Pain must be endured, toil borne, self-denial and watchfulness practiced, if you would have our arms to be victorious. You can no longer rest quietly at home, or take your ease in your tent, but must always be active, "up and doing." Not like "dumb, driven cattle" is to be your service, but it is yours to be "a hero in the strife."

You that are mustered into the army of Jesus Christ, the Captain of our salvation, go at once into "active service." Be watchful against the foes who seek your soul's destruction; be firm in your struggles against the devil; be true to yourself, true to your country, true to your God; in his name set up your banner, and you shall eventually be mustered into the holy, though active service of the victorious ranks of the heavenly host, who have "fought a good fight" and "laid hold on eternal life."

A GUIDE FOR VOLUNTEERS.

THE LEADER. The Lord, He it is that doth go before thee. Deut. xxxi, 8.

Behold, I have given him for a leader and commander to the people. Is. lv, 4.

The captain of their salvation. Heb. ii, 10.

THE WORD OF COMMAND. Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life. 1 Tim. xvi, 12.

Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong. 1 Cor. xvi, 13.

Be sober, be vigilant. 1 Pet. v, 7.

THE ENEMIES. Your adversary, the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour. 1 Pet. v, 8.

Fleshly lusts, which war against the soul. 1 Pet. ii, 11.

Principalities and powers—the rulers of the darkness of this world—spiritual wickedness in high places. 1 Pet. ii, 11.

All that is in the world, the lusts of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. 1 John ii, 16.

STANDING ORDERS. Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong. 1 Cor. xvi, 13.

Be sober, be vigilant. 1 Pet v, 8.

Watch unto prayer. 1 Pet. iv, 7,

Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation, Mat. xvi, 41.

Young men likewise exhort to be sober-minded. Titus, ii, 6.

Looking unto Jesus. Heb. xii, 2.

MARCHING ORDERS. Turn not to the right hand, nor to the left. Prov. iv, 27.

Walk in wisdom toward them that are without. Col. iv, 5.

Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be established. Prov. iv, 26.

That thou mayest walk in the ways of good men. Prov. ii, 20.

If sinners entice thee, consent thou not, etc. Prov. i, 10–15.

BODILY TRAINING. I keep my body under. 1 Cor. ix, 27.

Mortify, therefore, your members that are upon the earth, fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry. Col. iii, 5.

Whether, therefore, ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God. 1 Cor. x, 31.

Let your moderation be known unto all men. Phil. iv, 5.

Lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us. Heb. xii, 2.

Flee also youthful lusts. 2 Tim. ii, 22.

Let him deny himself. Luke ix, 23.

Young men like wise exhort to be sober-minded. Titus ii, 6.

THE WEAPONS. The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but spiritual, and mighty through God. 2 Cor. xi, 4.

Take unto you the whole armor of God. Having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the

breastplate of righteousness; and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace. Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the firey darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. Eph. vi, 13–17.

The Watchword. Emmanuel — (God with us.) Mat. i, 23.

The Banner. Jehovah Nissi. (The Lord is my banner.) Ex. xxvii, 15.

In the name of our God we will set up our banners. Ps. xx, 5.

Encouragements. The Lord thy God is with thee, whithersoever thou goest. Joshua i, 9.

If God be for us, who can be against us? Rom. xii, 31.

I am thy shield, and exceeding great reward. Gen. xv, 1.

As thy days, so shall thy strength be. Deut. xxiii, 24.

He hath said, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee. Heb. xiii, 5.

God shall supply all your need. Phil. iv, 19.

We know that all things work together for good to them that love God. Rom. viii, 28.

Final Victory. We are more than conquerors through him that loved us. Rom. viii, 3.

Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. 1 Cor. xv, 57.

To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my Throne, even as I also overcome, and am set down with my Father in His Throne.

Cautions by the Way. A soft answer turneth away wrath. Prov. xv, 1.

As much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. Rom. viii, 18.

Love your enemies. Mat. v, 44.

If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink. Rom. xii, 20.

[Having met with the plan of this tract, the substance of it has been revised, and is published under the belief that it is suited to do good.]—*Central Presbyterian.*

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